

REMARKS

This is a full and timely response to the election requirement in the Office Action dated January 19, 2005, for which one month was allotted for reply. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested. February 19, 2005 fell on a Saturday, and the following Monday, February 21, 2005 is a Federal holiday. Accordingly, this response submitted on February 22, 2005 is timely.

Election/Restriction

In response to the pending Action requiring an election of invention, the Applicant, through its representatives and attorneys, respectfully provisionally elects with traverse the species of Figs. 1 to 4, on which claims 1 to 15 and 19 to 21 read. Only claims 16 to 18 appear to read on the non-elected species of Figs. 5 and 6. The examiner has indicated that at least claims 1, 12 and 19 are generic to all species; that indication is acknowledged with appreciation. This requirement is respectfully traversed in that the examination of all 21 original claims presents no significant additional burden on the examiner given the need to examine 18 claims directed to the elected species. Withdrawal of the requirement is believed to be in order.

IDS

An IDS is of record citing the Applicant's prior patent on a similar but not patent-defeating embodiment.

Conclusion

Early examination on the merits of claims 1 to 15 and 19 to 21 is respectfully requested, and if any of the apparently generic claims 1, 12 and 19, or any other claim found to be generic is allowable, examination of the non-elected species is also requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Dated: February 22, 2005

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